

Everything

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old is new

once again

Old buildings, new tenants

By Bruce Webber

An old veteran returning to Hobart and looking for the familiar Amercian Legion Post 54 may be confused when he or she finds the old post at Main and Front Street is now a coin-operated laundry.

Looking for the Hobart roller rink on Indiana 130 east of town? It's now the Moose Lodge.

These buildings are just two of many in the city that have changed charactor over the years.

In all parts of the city, buildings have changed in use although the building itself remains baically the same.

The downtown district has been most active in change.

At Third and Main, two banks occupied buildings on the northeast and southeast corners. They are now a coin shop and jewelry store. On the southwest corner, the Finan

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Building was home to the city's Stratton Opera House. Remnants of the opera house on the second floor still show old theater scenery and a balcony for seating. With seats removed, the opera house was also home to Hobart High School basketball teams before Roosevelt Gym was built in the 1920s.

On the northwest corner, the building has seen a number of tenants, including Dyke's Drug Store, Vossberg's Apparel, Hobart Rexall (later Scholl) Drugs, and now New Image. In the rear on the roof a look-out platform and shanty served the early 1950s Civil Defense enemy aircraft spotters.

Four auto dealers had showrooms in downtown Hobart. One (Isakson Motors) has survived; one dealer (Heuring Ford) has moved; and a third is home to another business.

The Ford dealer that occupied the building at Third and East streets is now Express Auto Supply. The old Nash/Rambler dealer on Third Street is now the Games People Play hobby shop and the Studebaker dealer has disappeared from Second Street between Main and Center.

A casual walk down Main Street will reveal the longtime businesses and changes made over the years.

Fifty years ago (in 1946), businesses familiar even today were an established part of the downtown scene, but most others have changed.

In the 200 block of Main, the Art Theater survives. Also in the 200 block were Banker Paint and Wallpaper, where Brickie Photo is located. Tommy's Bar is now Rosie O'Grady's. Floyd Harrigan's Hobart Real Estate Exchange occupied the store that now

houses a comic book shop, and Lautzenhiser's Restaurant was located in what is now the north portion of Main Street Station tavern.

In the 300 block, the long-established Unity Shoe Shop and Odell Smith Jewelers remain. The Dollar General Store is one of a series of dime stores that included Schulz's and Harvey's. Hobart Furniture was a Kroger food store 50 years ago, and the Bridal Bouquet was the Dairy Maid ice cream parlor.

On the west side of the street, Joe's Fruit and Vegetable Market occupied what is now Hi Style Today and Rogers News Depot sold magazines in what is now a part of Bright Spot restaurant.

A long-established Rexall Drug Store occupied the space at 304 Main 50 years ago, now a part of Hobart Paint and Wallpaper. Down the block, Sanz Electric and Gifts was located in what is now Piper's Childrens Boutique and Modern Cleaners is now E&E Jewelry.

In the 400 block, Hobart Hatchery has become a photo studio and Hobart (Kellen's) Florist is now the home of State Farm Insurance. Kellen's later moved to the 300 block of Main Street.

Around the downtown area, the A&P store at the Third Street bridge is now an accountant's office, and the old Gary Railway bus barn is Boyd Construction. Across the street, Kramer's Super Service gas station is now home to Century 21 Realty.

Other buildings have gone since the 1940s, including Henderson's Dairy on the site of the current city hall and George Earle's mill that was destroyed by fire in 1953. It is now the site of NBD bank at Main and Front streets.